

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Please amend claims 1 and 11 as follows. This listing of claims replaces all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

1. (Currently Amended) A method, operable on an application within a computer system, for streamlining manual dropping of a plurality of objects within a display using an input device, the display presenting a surface suitable for dropping objects into, the input device being capable of converting user input into a two-dimensional position to drive a position of a cursor on the display, the method comprising:

detecting user action of dragging at least two objects from another application or a source of draggable objects in the application over said display using said input device, said at least two objects forming a list of attached objects, and entering a dropping mode;

while at least one of said at least two objects remains undropped, continuing to execute the following actions while in the dropping mode:

a) displaying a visual representation of each of said objects in said list proximal to a current position of said cursor, as a set of icons thumbnails, and

b) when the user's intention to drop an object is detected, executing the following actions:

bl) processing dropping of a first object in said list of attached objects into said surface at a position dictated by the current position of said cursor,

- b2) removing the visual representation of said dropped object from said set of icons thumbnails, and
 - b3) removing said dropped object from said list of attached objects;
 - c) performing steps b1), b2) and b3) for each object to be dropped, so that each of said at least two objects can be sequentially dropped at unique locations independently of other objects in said list of attached objects; and
- exiting said dropping mode when the list of attached objects is empty.
2. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1 wherein the user is additionally able to abort or temporarily leave and re-enter the mode of dropping multiple objects, said method comprising:
- signaling an intent to temporarily exit the mode of dropping multiple objects;
 - doing other work in the application;
 - signaling the intent to re-enter the mode of dropping multiple objects;
 - resuming the operation of the dropping mode at step a).
3. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1 wherein the set of icons thumbnails are further arranged in a regular row extending from the right of the cursor position and sorted by selection order with the icon representing the next object to be dropped being located at a left-most position of said row.

4. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1 wherein the set of icons thumbnails are further arranged in a regular column extending down from the cursor position and sorted by selection order with the icon representing the next object to be dropped being located at a top-most position of said column.

5. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1 wherein the set of icons thumbnails representing the said list of dragged objects is further limited to a maximum predetermined number of objects.

6. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 5 wherein when the number of objects in the list of attached objects exceeds said maximum predetermined number of objects, a final object in the set of icons thumbnails representing the dragged objects is further modified to indicate that additional objects remain to be dropped beyond those that are visible in the attached set of icons, the method comprising one of:

applying an alpha gradient to one of the thumbnail thumbnails such that the thumbnail fades to transparency
appending an icon indicating the presence of additional but unseen icons.

7. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1 wherein the set of icons thumbnails attached to the cursor can be further manipulated by the user, the method comprising:

rolling a mouse wheel in one direction or pressing a key to send the object in a first position within the set of objects attached to the cursor to a last position and refreshing the displayed list of ~~icons~~ thumbnails; or

rolling the mouse wheel in a direction opposite the one direction or pressing a another key to send the object in the last position within the set of objects attached to the cursor to the first position and refreshing the displayed list of ~~icons~~ thumbnails.

8. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1 wherein an object being dropped is an image, and wherein the ~~icons~~ thumbnails representing said image is a reduced-resolution version of said image.

9. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1 wherein additional objects can be inserted into the list of attached objects, the method comprising:

moving the pointing device such that the cursor is positioned over a non-dragged object to be added to the list of attached objects,

detecting the user's intention to insert said non-dragged object into the list of attached objects; and

adding a representation of said added non-dragged object into the set of ~~icons~~ thumbnails.

10. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1 wherein objects can be removed from the set of ~~icons~~ thumbnails and list of objects by:

signaling an intent to remove the first object;
removing said first object from said set of ~~icons~~ thumbnails; and
removing said first object from said list of attached objects.

11. (Currently Amended) A computer readable medium having computer instructions stored thereon for implementing a method of streamlining manual distribution of a plurality of objects within a display using an input device, the display presenting a surface suitable for dropping objects into, the input device capable of converting user input into a two-dimensional position to drive a position of a cursor on the display, the method comprising:

detecting user action of dragging at least two objects from another application or a source of draggable objects in the application over the display using the input device, said at least two objects forming a list of attached objects, and entering a dropping mode;

while at least one of said two objects remains undropped, continuing to execute the following actions while in the dropping mode:

- a) displaying a visual representation of each of said objects proximal to a current position of said cursor, as a set of ~~icons~~ thumbnails, and
- b) when the user's intention to drop an object is detected, executing the following actions:
 - bi) processing dropping of a first object in said list of attached objects onto said surface at a position dictated by the current position of said cursor;

- b2) removing the visual representation of said dropped object from said set of icons thumbnails; and
 - b3) removing said dropped object from said list of attached objects;
 - c) performing steps b1), b2) and b3) for each object to be dropped, so that each of said at least two objects can be sequentially dropped at unique locations independently of other objects in said list of attached objects; and
- exiting said dropping mode when the list of attached objects is empty.

12. (Previously Presented) The computer readable medium of claim 11 wherein the user is additionally able to abort or temporarily leave and re-enter the mode of dropping multiple objects, said method comprising:

- signaling an intent to temporarily exit the mode of dropping multiple objects;
- doing other work in said application;
- signaling the intent to re-enter the mode of dropping multiple objects;
- resuming the operation of said dropping mode at step a).

13. (Currently Amended) The computer readable medium of claim 11 wherein the set of icons thumbnails are further arranged in a regular row extending from the right of the cursor position and sorted by selection order with the [[icon]] thumbnail representing the next object to be dropped being located at the a left-most position of said row.

14. (Currently Amended) The computer readable medium of claim 11 wherein the set of ~~icons~~ thumbnails are further arranged in a regular column extending down from the cursor position and sorted by selection order with the ~~[[icon]]~~ thumbnail representing the next object to be dropped being located at a top-most position of said row.

15. (Currently Amended) The computer readable medium of claim 11 wherein the set of ~~icons~~ thumbnails representing the dragged objects that are displayed is further limited to a maximum predetermined number of objects.

16. (Currently Amended) The computer readable medium of claim 15 wherein the number of objects in the list of attached objects exceeds said maximum predetermined number of objects, a final object in the set of ~~icons~~ thumbnails representing the dragged objects is further modified to indicate that additional objects remain to be dropped beyond those that are visible in the attached set of ~~icons~~ thumbnails, the method comprising one of:

applying an alpha gradient to ~~[[a]]~~ one of the thumbnail thumbnails such that the thumbnail fades to transparency; or
appending an icon indicating the presence of additional but unseen icons.

17. (Currently Amended) The computer readable medium of claim 11 wherein the set of ~~icons~~ thumbnails attached to the cursor can be further manipulated by the user, the method comprising:

rolling a mouse wheel in one direction or pressing a key to send the object in a first position within the set of objects attached to the cursor to a last position and refreshing the displayed list of ~~icons~~ thumbnails; or

rolling the mouse wheel in a direction opposite the one direction or pressing a another key to send the object in the last position within the set of objects attached to the cursor to the first position and refreshing the displayed list of ~~icons~~ thumbnails.

18. (Currently Amended) The computer readable medium of claim 11 wherein the ~~[[icon]]~~ thumbnail representing said image is a reduced-resolution version of said image.

19. (Currently Amended) The computer readable medium of claim 11 wherein additional objects can be inserted into the list of attached objects, the method comprising:

moving the pointing device such that the cursor is positioned over a non-dragged object to be added to the list of attached objects,

detecting the user's intention to insert said non-dragged object into the list of attached objects, and

adding a representation of said added non-dragged object into the set of ~~icons~~ thumbnails.

20. (Currently Amended) The computer readable medium of claim 11 wherein objects can be removed from the set of ~~icons~~ thumbnails attached to the cursor, the method comprising:

signaling an intent to remove the first object;

removing said first object from said set of ~~icons~~ thumbnails; and

removing said first object from said list of attached objects.